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For Immediate Release

## **The Milwaukee County Parks Natural Areas Program received an award 2012 Virginia M. Kline Award for Excellence in Community-Based Restoration**

July 2, 2012 (Milwaukee, WI) The Milwaukee County Parks Natural Areas Program will be receiving the 2012 Virginia M. Kline Award for Excellence in Community-Based Restoration. The award ceremony will be October 11<sup>th</sup> at the UW-Arboretum in Madison. This prominent award is part of the Leopold Restoration Awards issued by the Friends of the Arboretum (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

This award recognizes the Natural Areas Program's efforts using creative partnerships to maintain and improve the ecology of the 10,000 acres of natural areas within the Milwaukee County Park System. It is a direct result of the nearly 14,000 hours citizens and partners have donated between 2009-2011 towards natural area restoration projects in an effort to maintain this vital publicly owned resource.

"Named after pioneering University of Wisconsin conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Restoration Awards recognize excellence in ecological restoration. By recognizing and rewarding exemplary restoration ecology work, we hope to encourage others in this critical effort while supporting the Arboretum's goals and activities." Arboretum website: [http://uwarboretum.org/foa/leopold\\_restoration\\_awards.php](http://uwarboretum.org/foa/leopold_restoration_awards.php)

The purpose of the Virginia M. Kline award is to recognize a public or private organization that has dedicated time, skill, and efforts toward community-based ecological restoration. Involving people fulfills Virginia M. Kline and Aldo Leopold's aims -- that humans take their rightful place as full members of the land community. Community-based restoration brings the human community together and creates a more satisfactory relationship between humans and the larger biotic community.

Natural Areas Mission Statement: Blending Milwaukee County's diverse and unique natural areas with its culturally rich communities to preserve and nurture its natural heritage for current and future generations.

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